- Organization of special events like the Rajiv Gandhi Akshay Urja Diwas;
- Constitution of District-level Advisory Committees in the States to facilitate effective coordination of renewable energy schemes/programmes.

During the Eleventh Plan period it is proposed to add power generation capacity of 15,000 MW from renewable sources and deploy 11.6 million sq. meter of solar thermal collector area for water heating, cooking, drying applications and 2 million cubic meter aggregate capacity of family type biogas plants. Provision of renewable energy systems for electricity/ lighting and other uses in 10,000 remote villages is also envisaged.

Merchant Power Plants

4108. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether in its effort to achieve a power capacity addition of 78,577 MW, the Ministry had envisaged capacity addition of around 15,000 MW, by tapping Merchant Power Plants;

(b) whether Government's plans have come a cropper as it now looks at an entirely new policy for Merchant Power Plants (MPPs), with its earlier policy failing to attract bidders;

(c) what are the 24 sites which have been considered for MPPs in the country; and

(d) what are the concrete measures taken to enhance capacity of 15,000 MW from MPPs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) to (d) According to the Report of the Working Group on Power for Eleventh Plan, a capacity addition of about 10,000-12,000 MW is envisaged during the Eleventh Plan period through Merchant Power Plants (MPPs). This capacity has not been taken into acount while working out the required capacity during the Eleventh Plan.

Unlike conventional power plants with tied-up Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), MMPs compete for customers and absorbe the full market risk. Typically the risk of MPP is carried on the balance sheet of the promoter. Cosequent to enactment of the Electricity Act, 2003, thermal generation has been de-licensed and the developer has to tie-up site and other inputs required to set up power plants.

Government has taken several measures for facilitating the development of MPPs such as:

- The National Electricity Policy, 2006, provides that a part of new generating capacity of about 15% may be sold outside long term PPAs.
- Under the new Hydro Policy, 2008, private developers have been given the facility of 40% merchant sale in the power generation [after deducting free power to the host State(s)].
- Open access in transmission has been introduced in the Electricity Act, 2003 which would enable the MPPs to have connectivity with the National Grid through Regional Grid/State Grid. In distribution open access is to be introduced in phases. For consumers with requirement of more than one Mega Watt, open access is to be mandatorily introduced by January, 2009.

- Fuel tie-ups are being facilitated for all type of thermal power plants including MPPs.

Efficiency of power plants

4109. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Plant Load Factor (PLF), a measure of efficiency of power plants, is higher in case of private power plants, when compared to the Central and State power plants;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Central Government proposes to take any steps to improve the efficiency of power plants, owned by the Central and State Governments; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, including the amount spent for the purpose during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH) : (a) and (b) The Plant Load Factor (PLF) of private sector thermal power plants is higher as compared with the Central and State sector thermal power plants. The sector-wise details of PLF of thermal power plants (Coal/Lignite) for the last three years are given below:

Sector	PLF(%)		
	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Central	82.1	84.8	86.7
State	67.1	70.6	71.9
Private	85.4	86.3	90.8
ALL INDIA:	73.6	76.8	78.6

The main reasons of low PLF of thermal power plants in the public sector, especially the State Sector Plants, are vintage units, obsolescence of technology, mismatch in the designed fuel quality and fuel actually supplied, long duration outages of the units for planned and unscheduled maintenance, etc.

(c) and (d) The following steps are being taken to improve performance of Thermal Power Stations:

(i) Renovation, modernization, uprating and life extension programmes of old and in-efficient generating units.

(ii) "Partnership in Excellence" (PIE) Programme was initiated by Ministry of Power, Government of India, in August, 2005 with a view to improve the performance of low performing units of power utilities with assistance from better performing power utilities like NTPC.

(iii) Continuous inter-action of CEA engineers with Power Stations Authorities, BHEL and other concerned agencies for sorting out operation and maintenance problems and site visits for monitoring the performance of units.

(iv) Reducing the duration of Planned Maintenance in the thermal power stations.